

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for scheduling appointments to do a job, comprising the steps of:

(a) receiving operator input specifying each service and a time dependency of each service needed to perform the job;

(b) receiving operator input specifying a time availability of each resource that can be used to perform each service needed to perform the job;

(c) at a time before the appointment to do [[a]] the job is actually scheduled, automatically creating a plurality of proposals that specify when the job might be scheduled during a defined time period, as a function of each service specified by an operator, and the time dependency of each service specified by an operator, the plurality of proposals being created as a function of the time availability of each resource that can be used to perform each service needed to perform the job specified by an operator, wherein at least one resource can be included in any number of the plurality of proposals at a same time availability, each proposal indicating a time instance at which the job can be initiated during the defined time period;

(d) after the plurality of proposals have been created, receiving input specifying a desired time for starting the appointment to do [[a]] the job;

(e) based upon the desired time for starting the appointment to do [[a]] the job, automatically selecting one of the plurality of proposals that was created prior to the input specifying a desired time for starting the appointment, to make an appointment for doing the job;

(f) associating the corresponding resources required for the selected proposal with the appointment and identifying the resources as being unavailable; and

(g) automatically revising the plurality of proposals in response to said one of the plurality of proposals being selected to make an appointment for doing the job, including revising proposals for which resources are no longer available due to making the appointment for doing the job and eliminating any proposals from among the plurality of proposals for which proposals cannot be revised due to resources no longer being available.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of associating the proposal with a customer for whom the job is to be done.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically creating the plurality of proposals comprises the steps of automatically searching each of the services needed to perform the job to identify an availability of each block of time that is:

- (a) sufficient in duration to perform the service; and
- (b) for which resources required to perform the service are available.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 3, further comprising the step of associating a job identification with each block of time that is thus identified.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 3, further comprising the step of splitting a block of time into pieces, to define a proposal having a split time interval in which the job can be performed.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving operator input assigning different priorities to at least some of the resources, so that a resource assigned a lower priority is used prior to a resource assigned a higher priority, when selecting said one of the plurality of proposals to schedule the appointment.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of specifying the time availability of each resource includes the step of specifying any block of time in which a resource is unavailable to perform a service during the defined time period.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of selecting one of the plurality of proposals comprises the step of balancing usage of the resources that can be used to perform the services needed to perform the job.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein a plurality of the services needed to perform the job are carried out sequentially, with a first service being completed before a second service can begin.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein a plurality of the services needed to perform the job are carried out in parallel, with a first service being completed while a second service is also being done.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically creating the plurality of proposals is completed at a time before the step of automatically selecting is carried out.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of repeating steps (a) through (b) for each of a plurality of additional jobs, thereby scheduling appointments for the additional jobs.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of receiving input instructing an appointment to be cancelled, and in response thereto, automatically revising the plurality of proposals, to accommodate changes in the time availability of resources that were previously required to perform said one of the plurality of proposals corresponding to the appointment that was canceled, making the resources available for other appointments.

Claims 14 - 47. (Canceled)